

Anglosphere

This article is about the sociopolitical concept encompassing developed nations where English is the primary language. For other nations where English is an official language or widely spoken, see [English-speaking world](#) or [List of countries where English is an official language](#)

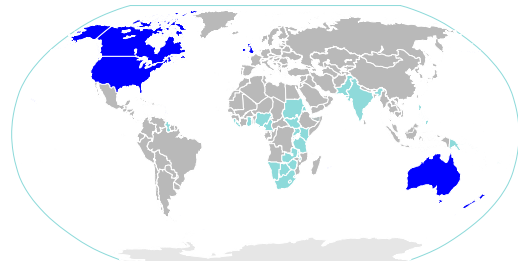
Anglosphere refers to a set of English-speaking nations with a similar cultural heritage, based upon populations originating from the nations of the [British Isles](#) (England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland), and which today maintain close political and military cooperation. While the nations included in different sources vary, the term *anglosphere* usually does not include all countries where English is an official language, although the nations that are commonly included were all once part of the [British Empire](#). In its most restricted sense, the term covers the [United Kingdom](#), [Ireland](#), the [United States](#), [Canada](#), [Australia](#) and [New Zealand](#), which post-British Empire maintain a close affinity of cultural, familial and political links with one another. Additionally, all these countries (except Ireland) are militarily aligned under the following programs: [UKUSA Agreement](#) (signals intelligence), [Five Eyes](#) (intelligence), [Combined Communications Electronics Board](#) (communications electronics), [The Technical Cooperation Program](#) (technology and science), [Air and Space Interoperability Council](#) (air forces), [AUSCANNZUKUS](#) (navies), and [ABCA Armies](#).

1 Overview

Below is a table comparing the countries of the Anglosphere (data updated in 2014).^[1] Countries are classified in order according to their population.

2 Definitions

'The Anglosphere' was first coined, but not explicitly defined, by the science fiction writer [Neal Stephenson](#) in his book *The Diamond Age*, published in 1995.^[2] [John Lloyd](#) adopted the term in 2000 and defined it as including the [United States](#) and the [United Kingdom](#) along with English-speaking [Canada](#), [Australia](#), [New Zealand](#), [Ireland](#), [South Africa](#) and the [British West Indies](#).^[3] The [Merriam-Webster dictionary](#) defines the Anglosphere as “the countries of the world in which the English language and cultural values predominate”.^[4] The *Shorter Oxford*



Definitions of the Anglosphere vary: countries in which English is the first language of the majority of the population are shown in blue ; other countries present possess substantial English knowledge dating back to the British Empire (they are shown in light blue)

English Dictionary uses the definition “the group of countries where English is the main native language”.^[5]

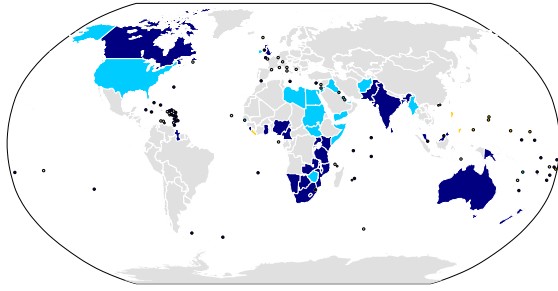
3 Proponents

The American businessman [James C. Bennett](#), a proponent of the idea that there is something special about the cultural and legal traditions of English-speaking nations, writes in his 2004 book *The Anglosphere Challenge*:

The Anglosphere, as a network civilization without a corresponding political form, has necessarily imprecise boundaries. Geographically, the densest nodes of the Anglosphere are found in the [United States](#) and the [United Kingdom](#). English-speaking [Canada](#), [Australia](#), [New Zealand](#), [Ireland](#) and English-speaking [South Africa](#) (who constitute a very small minority in that country) are also significant populations. The English-speaking [Caribbean](#), [English-speaking Oceania](#) and the English-speaking educated populations in [Africa](#) and [India](#) constitute other important nodes.

—[James C. Bennett](#).^[6]

[Bennett](#) argues that there are two challenges confronting his concept of the Anglosphere. The first is finding ways to cope with rapid technological advancement and the second is the geopolitical challenges created by what he assumes will be an increasing gap between anglophone prosperity and economic struggles elsewhere.^[7]



Commonwealth of Nations members (all except Rwanda and Mozambique formerly parts of the British Empire) countries that were formerly part of the British Empire but currently not a member of the Commonwealth countries formerly under United States rule or influence that have adopted English as one of their main languages

British historian Andrew Roberts claims that the Anglosphere has been central in the First World War, Second World War and Cold War. He goes on to contend that anglophone unity is necessary for the defeat of Islamism.^[8]

According to a 2003 profile in *The Guardian*, historian Robert Conquest favoured a British withdrawal from the European Union in favour of creating “a much looser association of English-speaking nations, known as the 'Anglosphere'”.^[9]

New Zealand historian James Belich connected patterns of growth in the industrialisation of the United States and the United Kingdom with former Dominions of the British Empire New Zealand, Australia, Canada and South Africa, and more loosely to growth in former UK constituent country Ireland, as well as British-allied Argentina, during the 19th and early to mid-20th century, in his book *Replenishing the Earth*. He used the term “Anglo-World” to refer to the US, UK and former Dominions, arguing that the experience and present reality of former British colonies like India, Kenya and Jamaica differ in substantial and important ways from this core group of countries.

4 Criticisms

Michael Ignatieff wrote in an exchange with Robert Conquest, published by the *New York Review of Books*, that the term neglects the evolution of fundamental legal and cultural differences between the US and the UK, and the ways in which UK and European norms have been drawn closer together during Britain’s membership in the EU through regulatory harmonisation. Of Conquest’s view of the Anglosphere, Ignatieff writes: “He seems to believe that Britain should either withdraw from Europe [Brexit] or refuse all further measures of cooperation, which would jeopardize Europe’s real achievements. He wants Britain to throw in its lot with a union of English-speaking peoples, and I believe this to be a romantic illusion”.^[10]

5 See also

- British diaspora in Africa
- English-speaking world
- Five Nations Passport Group
- *History of the English Speaking Peoples* (Winston Churchill)
- List of countries by English-speaking population
- List of countries where English is an official language

6 References

- [1] “The World Factbook”. Central Intelligence Agency. Retrieved 2015-02-16.
- [2] Word Spy
- [3] Lloyd, John (2000). “The Anglosphere Project”. *New Statesman*. Retrieved 30 November 2012.
- [4] “Anglosphere”. *Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. Merriam-Webster, Incorporated. 2012. Retrieved 30 November 2012.
- [5] *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (6th ed.), Oxford University Press, 2007, ISBN 978-0-19-920687-2
- [6] Bennett 2004, p.80.
- [7] Bennett 2004
- [8] Roberts 2006
- [9] Brown 2003.
- [10] Conquest & Reply by Ignatieff 2000.

7 Bibliography

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8 External links

- James C. Bennett (2002) An Anglosphere Primer, presented to the Foreign Policy Research Institute

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